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POPULAR TALES FROM THE NORSE. By SIR GEORGE WEBBE DASENT.

With an Introductory Essay on the Origin and Diffusion of Popular Tales. Third edition. New York : G. P. Putnam's Sons. Edinburgh : David Douglas. 1888. 8vo, pp. cli., 443.

In 1842 P. C. Asbjørnsen and J. Moe published at Christiania a collection of Norse popular tales, which next to Grimm's are the most perfect of their class. The collectors, especially Asbjørnsen, were gifted with a genius for their work which no one has since possessed ; knowing intimately the heart of the people, and fully alive to the value of popular traditions, they have given their stories not exactly as they were told but as they would have been told by themselves. They have altered no feature in the tales, have changed nothing of the artlessness of the narrator, and yet have communicated to their collection an incomparable glamour. With them can be compared only the tales of Grimm, and the numberless collections of late years seem pale and lifeless when read after them. Still every collector cannot be a Grimm or an Asbjørnsen, and it is better that popular tales should now be collected exactly as they are recited, even stenographed like those of Imbriani.

The collection of Asbjørnsen and Moe fortunately fell into the hands of Sir George Dasent who published in 1859 forty-six of the sixty tales in A. & M.'s first collection ; in the second edition published soon after thirteen tales were added, as the translator said, to complete the collection. This statement was not exact, as he omitted two stories, A. & M. 59 and 60, and made two out of No. 17. The missing stories were afterwards translated in "Tales from the Fjeld" (London, 1874), which contained the second collection of Norse tales made by Asbjørnsen alone in 1845. The praise we have bestowed upon the original we can also bestow upon the unrivalled translation of Sir George Dasent, which will always remain a model for such work. The translator also appended an interesting, although brief, collection of *Ananzi* or "Spider" stories from the West Indies, and has prefaced his work with an elaborate introduction upon the origin and diffusion of popular tales and upon Norse mythology. Sir George Dasent holds to the Grimm theory, and as no change has been made in his introduction since 1858, no account has been taken of recent theories. In spite of this defect we welcome most heartily this new edition of a charming book, which has been out of print for some time, and which will long be a delight to readers of all ages. T. F. C.

KALEVALAN TOISINNOT (LES VARIANTES DU KALEVALA). Suomen Kansallis-epoksen Ainetset. [Epic Songs of the Finnish People. Published by the Society of Finnish Literature.] First Series. Liv. I. Helsingfors. 8vo. Pp. iv., 172. Price 6 francs.

The programme of this edition of the variants of the "Kalevala" set forth that the epic poem known under that name was composed by Lönnrot out of folk-songs, but with many alterations. Different versions were united, parts transposed or even added, language and metre reformed,